

October 21, 1998

A Dictionary of the Senate's Major Accomplishments During the 105th Congress

The Republican-led 105th Congress has made a positive difference in people's lives. We passed the first balanced budget in a generation, enacted sweeping tax reform laws to make our tax system simpler and fairer, improved the safety of the Nation's highways and pushed forward on comprehensive education reform measures to provide America's children more opportunities. Below is a sampling of the Senate's accomplishments over the last two years, listed alphabetically.

Accelerated Crop Insurance Payments

Public Law: P.L. 105-228

Accelerates the fiscal year 1999 crop payments to provide relief to farmers facing recent financial hardships.

Adoption and Safe Families Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-89

Rewards state efforts to reduce the time a child spends in the foster care system, in part by placing greater priority on moving children toward permanent placement with a loving family.

Agriculture Disaster Relief and Market Loss Assistance

Cleared for the President

Provides some \$5.9 billion in emergency relief to farmers enduring financial hardships due to weather conditions and declining markets, including tax relief in the form of permanent income averaging; a five-year net operating loss carryback; income deferment on market transition payments; and 60-percent deductibility (up from 45 percent) for health insurance for the self-employed (these provisions included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Agriculture Research, Extension and Education Reform Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-185

Makes significant reforms to the agricultural research system and provides new funding for research to address future food production and environmental protection to reduce risk, improve public health and enhance agricultural competitiveness.

American Missile Protection Act

Stopped by two Democrat Filibusters

Designed to deploy a national missile defense system to defend the United States against limited ballistic missile attacks, whether accidental, unauthorized or deliberate.

Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction

Public Law: P.L. 105-12

Assures that federal funds and facilities will not provide or promote assisted suicides.

Assistive Technology Act

Cleared for the President

Creates a grant program to states to access technologies designed to assist individuals with disabilities.

Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-149

Ensures prudent management of existing Atlantic striped bass populations and imposes a moratorium on fishing in the coastal waters of states that are not complying with the Fisheries Commission's management plan.

Balanced Budget Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-33

Provides for a balanced budget for the first time since 1969.

Balanced Budget Constitutional Amendment

Vote in Senate, 66-34 (67 required for passage)

Although this constitutional amendment narrowly failed to obtain the required two-thirds vote in the Senate, the vote was another sign of our intent to bring the federal budget under control.

Ban on Federally Imposed National Testing

Cleared for the President

Ensures that rather than mandating a centralized new national test, local schools are given the tools they need to provide for educational excellence (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1997

Public Law: P.L. 105-168

Calls for the implementation of a variety of strategies to help prevent birth defects.

Bulletproof Vest Partnership Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-181

Establishes a grant program to help states and localities purchase bulletproof vests for law enforcement personnel.

Carl Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act Amendments

Cleared for the President

Provides additional funding for vocational and technical education programs, strengthens academic standards, broadens opportunities after high school and sends more federal dollars directly to the classroom.

Cellular Telephone Protection Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-172

Combats the growing problem of cellular telephone crime by making it easier to prosecute -- it's now a federal crime -- those who fraudulently charge cellular calls to others' accounts through the use of so-called "cloning" software or hardware.

Child Custody Protection Act

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

Prohibits transporting minors across state lines for abortions to avoid state laws mandating parental involvement in the abortion decision.

Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act

Cleared for the President

Provides children with increased access to food and nutrition assistance, and encourages the creation of after-school education and enrichment programs for low-income and at-risk children.

Child Protection and Sexual Predator Punishment Act

Cleared for the President

Protects children from sexual abuse and exploitation by enhancing the ability of law enforcement to prosecute persons who commit sex crimes against children, and makes it a crime to use the Internet to contact a child for sexual purposes.

Children's Health Block Grant

Public Law: P.L. 105-33

Establishes a \$24 billion program designed to provide health insurance to low-income, uninsured children.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act

Cleared for the President

Prohibits online services from unlawfully collecting personal information about children (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Children's Online Protection Act

Cleared for the President

Protects children from pornographic material and from other materials "harmful to children" on the Internet (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Community-Designed Charter Schools

Cleared for the President

Expands and improves charter schools.

Community Opportunities, Accountability, Training and Educational Services Act (Head Start)

Cleared for the President

Promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of low-income kids through the provision of health, educational and nutritional services.

Copyright Term Extension

Cleared for the President

Extends the duration of certain copyrights.

Counter-Drug Activities

Cleared for the President

The omnibus FY99 funding bill contains \$690 million in emergency spending for counter-drug interdiction efforts, including funding for U.S. Coast Guard operations and equipment, U.S. Customs Service operations and equipment, and technology enhancements for the Southwest Border.

Credit Union Membership Access Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-219

Responds to a Supreme Court decision on the issue of fair competition by ensuring that credit union members can retain their membership, while also addressing concerns about competition by limiting the growth of future large multiple-bond credit unions.

Crime Identification Technology Act

Public Law: P. L. 105-251

Improves interstate criminal justice identification, information, communications and forensics.

Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-187

Makes it a felony to avoid paying child support by traveling interstate or to a foreign country, and for failing to pay child support for more than two years.

Defense Spending Enhancements

Cleared for the President

Addresses rapid declines in defense spending since President Clinton took office by adding \$9 billion in emergency funding for urgent shortfalls such as flying hours, spare parts, depot maintenance, and personnel recruiting and retention initiatives (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Digital Millennium Copyright Act

Cleared for the President

Designed to bring the U.S. into the 21st Century and into compliance with treaty obligations imposed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Dolphin Conservation Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-42

Resolves a major environmental issue by allowing only countries in compliance with the International Dolphin Conservation Program to export tuna to the United States.

Domestic Drug Use Reduction Targets

Cleared for the President

The FY99 Treasury-General Government Appropriations bill, (included as part of the omnibus funding bill) targets drug use and gang-related activities by providing \$1.95 billion for drug-related activities, doubling the funding for the Drug-Free Communities Act, and increasing funding for High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas.

Drug Czar Reauthorization

Cleared for the President

Reauthorizes the Office of National Drug Control Policy by providing the "drug czar" with new budgetary authorities to force the government bureaucracy to make the fight against drugs a top priority, and requires the government's National Drug Control Strategy to aim at reducing drug abuse and drug-related crime at a much faster rate (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Drug Demand Reduction Act

Cleared for the President

Authorizes more than \$200 million to improve drug demand reduction efforts, primarily through an anti-drug media campaign designed to provide greater flexibility in reaching youths (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Drug-Free Communities Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-20

Establishes a grant program to support communities in the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to reduce teen drug use.

Drug-Free Neighborhoods Act

Passed Senate

An amendment to the failed tobacco bill, this bill is a comprehensive proposal to reduce teen drug use by stopping the flow of drugs at the border; protecting neighborhoods and schools from drugs; increasing resources for law enforcement agencies; and requiring a four-year National Drug Control Strategy at the beginning of every presidential term.

Drug-Free Workplaces

Cleared for the President

Authorizes \$10 million in Small Business Administration grants to assist small businesses in implementing drug-free workplace programs (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Education Savings and School Excellence Act

Vetoed

Expands the popular education savings accounts to include expenses from grades K-12, and increases the savings amount from \$500 per year to \$2,000 per year; provides additional education tax incentives for employers and college students; provides incentives for states to implement merit pay for teachers and teacher testing; and strengthens the Safe Schools anti-gun program.

Emergency Student Loan Consolidation Bill

Public Law: P.L. 105-78

Allowed borrowers to consolidate their student loans and take advantage of lower interest rates after the Department of Education suspended its loan consolidation program (included in the FY98 Labor-HHS appropriations bill).

Escape from Dangerous Schools

Passed Senate

Provides that federal education funds be used to aid children who were victims of violent crime in transferring to another school, public or private (amendment to the FY98 budget resolution).

Family Friendly Workplace Act

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

Revises a 50-year-old law that prevents any flexibility within the 8-hour-a-day, 40-hour-work-week schedule, by allowing employers and employees, on a voluntary basis, to agree on work schedules that better meet family needs.

Farmer Export Relief

Public Law: P.L. 105-194

Restores USDA export credit guarantees to Pakistan and India, resulting in U.S. agriculture exports to these countries.

Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-115

Provides much-needed streamlining and accountability of the FDA, and reauthorizes the Prescription Drug User Fee Act governing drug safety and efficacy reviews of pharmaceuticals.

Food Stamp Waste, Fraud and Abuse Reforms

Cleared for the President

Reforms the food stamp program by ensuring that food stamps are not issued to the dead.

Foreign Affairs Agencies Reform and Consolidation

Cleared for the President

Reauthorizes operations of the State Department and other foreign affairs agencies. The U.S. Information Agency (USIA) and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) are abolished, with their functions folded into the State Department to promote efficiency and savings (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Foreign Assistance Funding to U.N. Population Agency Denied

Cleared for the President

For the first time ever, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was denied funding under the appropriation for international family planning assistance. The UNFPA has been implicated in China's policies of forced abortion and involuntary sterilization (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

"Global Warming" Treaty Implementation Prohibitions

Cleared for the President

Prohibits the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing or issuing rules, regulations, decrees, or orders to implement or prepare to implement the Kyoto "global warming" protocol, which has not been sent to the Senate for advice and consent (prohibition passed as part of the FY99 VA-HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations bill).

"Global Warming" Treaty Protections for U.S. Economy

Resolution passed Senate

Repudiates the President's position by expressly opposing (passed, 95-5) any international climate change agreement that would cause "serious economic harm" to the United States, or impose legally binding energy controls on us if similar restrictions are not placed on all other countries.

Government Paperwork Elimination Act

Cleared for the President

Increases efficiency by promoting digital signature technology: requires federal agencies to make online versions of their forms available; and allows individuals to use digital signatures to file forms electronically (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act

Cleared for the President

Establishes a process for identifying, reviewing and implementing the recommendations of the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration and Study report.

Gunowners Protections

Cleared for the President

Strengthens congressional intent by protecting firearm purchasers from having to finance the Brady National Instant Check System with a gun tax, and assures the Federal Government will

continue to uphold its prohibition against record keeping of law-abiding gun owners (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Health Professions Education Partnerships Act

Cleared for the President

Reauthorizes health care training programs by providing comprehensive, flexible and effective authority for the support of health professions training and community-based education partnerships.

Higher Education Affordability and Access Reauthorization

Public Law: P.L. 105-244

Makes it easier for families to send their kids to college and realize the American dream of achievement through education by lowering student loan rates, increasing Pell Grants, and encouraging quality preparation for teachers.

Home Healthcare Payments

Cleared for the President

Republicans crafted a last-minute solution to potential catastrophe created by the Health Care Financing Administration's (HCFA) inability to institute the prospective payment system (PPS) enacted in last year's Balanced Budget Act, by providing \$1.7 billion in additional payments to home health agencies that guarantees there would be no losers among home health providers (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Homeowners Protection Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-216

Requires homeowners to be notified when their private mortgage insurance is no longer required, thus saving them the annual cost of unnecessary premiums.

Housing Reforms for Low-Income Americans

Public Law: P.L. 105-65

Saves scarce federal resources by reducing excessive housing subsidies, while at the same time preserving the availability of decent, safe, and affordable housing for low-income households.

Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act

Cleared for the President

Makes the theft of a person's identity a crime.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-17

Assures educational opportunities for Americans with disabilities, increases parental involvement, reduces excessive litigation and burdensome federal paperwork requirements, and makes it less difficult to suspend violent children posing a threat to other students and teachers.

Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act

Cleared for the President

Provides protection to Intelligence Community employees who report urgent concerns to Congress (included in the FY99 Intelligence Authorization Conference Report).

Internal Revenue Service (I.R.S.) Restructuring and Reform Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-206

Provides much needed reforms of an out-of-control tax collection agency, including \$12.9 billion over 10 years in real and lasting tax relief.

International Monetary Fund Reforms

Cleared for the President

Funds provided to the IMF are conditioned on reforms to promote U.S. firms' market access to recipient countries to ensure that assistance does not help foreign firms undercut U.S. producers, and on reforms assuring the United States can better monitor IMF activities (included in omnibus FY99 funding bill.)

Internet Tax Moratorium

Cleared for the President

Imposing a moratorium on the taxation of online services and electronic commerce, this bill addresses widespread concern that states and localities may impose potentially unpredictable and overly burdensome taxes on Internet activity that could stunt the growth of this fledgling arena of commerce (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Iran-Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act

Vetoed

Requires the President to impose certain sanctions on foreign persons when there is credible evidence they transferred items that could assist Iran in the acquisition, development, or production, of ballistic missiles.

Local Control of Education

Passed Senate

Returns control to local school districts by block granting to them most federal dollars for grades K-12 (amendment to Education Savings Account bill).

Medical Marijuana Resolution

Cleared for the President

Puts Congress and the Administration on record in opposition to efforts in certain states to legalize marijuana and other drugs for so-called "medical use" (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Medicare Preservation Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-33

The Balanced Budget contains important provisions to preserve, reform, and improve Medicare and to extend the Medicare Trust Fund's solvency.

Methamphetamine Trafficking Penalty Enhancement Act

Cleared for the President

Decreases the quantities of methamphetamine necessary to trigger certain mandatory minimum drug trafficking penalties, matching the penalties for trafficking in crack cocaine (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Promotion Act

Cleared for the President

Allows the Interior Department to use up to \$1 million a year in receipts from the Federal Duck Stamp program — which requires all waterfowl hunters to purchase annually and carry a federal duck stamp—for advertising and promotion of the program. Receipts from the stamps are earmarked for the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission to buy or lease waterfowl sanctuaries.

Music Licensing Act

Cleared for the President

Provides new rules for music licensing fees and exempts certain small businesses.

National Park Service Management Improvement Act

Cleared for the President

Provides for improved management and increased accountability for certain National Park Service Programs.

National Park System Restoration Act: Vision 2020

Cleared for the President

Reforms and improves the management and accountability of several National Park Service programs, and expands opportunities for the Park Service to increase and retain additional revenues for operation of the National Park System.

National Science Foundation Reauthorization

Cleared for the President

Reauthorizes the National Science Foundation programs for the first time in a decade and strengthens investment in basic math, science and engineering research.

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-57

Enhances and improves the operation of the National Wildlife Refuge System to better protect wildlife-dependent recreation, such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography.

National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteers and Community Partnership Act
Public Law: P.L. 105-242

Improves the maintenance and operation of the National Wildlife Refuge System by encouraging greater participation by volunteers, promoting community partnerships between the refuge and local groups, and providing incentives for private donations to refuges.

NATO Expansion

Treaty Ratified

Expands the NATO alliance to include the new democracies of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1998

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

After years of forethought, this bill allows the consolidation of high-level nuclear waste into a single, secure and safe storage repository, an action designed to eliminate environmental and national security dangers inherent in the current storage of these wastes in 80 different sites nationwide.

Ocean Shipping Reform Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-258

Encourages competition in international shipping and the growth of exports.

Partial-Birth Abortion Ban

Vetoed; override failed in Senate

Defends the sanctity of innocent human life by prohibiting a heinous procedure known as partial-birth abortion.

Patients' Bill of Rights

Democrats blocked floor consideration

Extends managed care protections to people currently unprotected and increases access to private health insurance by allowing full deductibility of health insurance for the self-employed and by opening up to everyone the option of tax-favorable medical savings accounts.

Paycheck Protection Act

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

Requires labor unions and corporations to get the voluntary consent of their members and workers before using workers' money for political purposes.

Police Survivors Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-180

Provides funds to family members of officers who have died in the line of duty.

Product Liability Reform Act

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

Designed to help strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. companies in the global marketplace, this bill is a good first step towards overhauling an unfair and inefficient liability system: the bill's primary function is to provide inventors and entrepreneurs with much-needed predictability to an unpredictable patchwork of state laws.

Property Rights Implementation Act

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

Ensures that property owners have fair access to federal courts to vindicate their federal constitutional rights.

Protecting Americans' Freedom of Speech

Speech protected through defeat of bill

The Senate defeated a campaign "reform" bill that would have hijacked the First Amendment for those politicians who think Americans talk too much about politics. Republicans are not going to vote for a bill that protects incumbents. Also, Republicans want to see current campaign laws enforced — which this Administration has shown itself reluctant to do.

Public Housing Reform and Responsibility Act

Cleared for the President

Consolidates public housing funding and transfers primary responsibility to states and localities, and encourages greater self-sufficiency and economic independence among residents (included as part of the FY99 VA-HUD appropriations conference report).

Quincy Library Project

Cleared for the President

Promotes local forestry management and control by providing \$5 million for a management plan for a National Forest developed by local public and private interests rather than the Forest Service bureaucracy in Washington, D.C (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Reading Excellence Act

Cleared for the President

Provides assistance to state and local communities to improve the reading and literacy skills of children and families (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Religious Freedom Act

Cleared for the President

Redresses a major shortcoming in U.S. human rights policy by providing accountability of the President's efforts to combat persecution on account of religion in foreign countries.

Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-183

Amends the bankruptcy law to prevent a trustee from voiding qualified charitable contributions.

Religious Workers Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-54

Extends the special immigrant program for religious workers.

School Choice for Low-Income D.C. Students

Vetoed

Provides a pilot program for the District of Columbia that allows low-income students the chance to escape from failing and dangerous schools, and, with opportunity scholarships, to attend a public or private school of their choice that better serves their educational needs.

Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act

Cleared for the President

Ensures that the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 — passed, over a presidential veto — is not circumvented by plaintiff lawyers bringing actions in state court rather than federal court, and promotes economic growth by protecting entrepreneurial companies from the threat of securities class-action lawsuits.

Small Business Reauthorization

Public Law: P.L. 105-135

Reauthorizes loan programs, creates a HUB Zones Program to encourage small businesses to provide welfare-to-work opportunities, and adds an outreach program for disabled veterans.

Soldiers' Quality of Life Enhancements

Public Law: P.L. 105-45

Adds \$800 million for military construction, more than half of which is dedicated to quality of life enhancements, such as upgrading military housing, for our uniformed personnel.

Taxpayer Browsing Protection Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-35

Imposes penalties on federal employees for the unauthorized access of tax return information.

Taxpayer Extension Relief

Cleared for the President

Extends certain expiring tax provisions including the research and development tax credit and the work opportunity tax credit (which includes aid to working women attempting to stay off welfare); makes the self-employed health insurance deduction 100-percent deductible four years faster (by 2003 rather than 2007); and reauthorizes the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) which enhances private-sector economic development in developing countries, and the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA), which helps firms and workers adversely affected by changing trade conditions (these provisions all included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Taxpayer Relief Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-34

Provides \$185 billion in much needed tax relief — the first tax cut in 16 years — for taxpayers at every stage of life, including a \$500/child tax credit, capital gains relief, education tax credits, and estate tax relief, and does so while still assuring a balanced budget.

Teacher Quality Initiative

Cleared for the President

The omnibus FY99 funding bill provides \$1.2 billion in additional education funds— funds controlled 100-percent at the local level — to school districts to recruit, hire, train and test teachers. This provision is a major first step toward returning to local school officials the ability to make the educational decisions for our children, rather than the bureaucrats in Washington.

Telemarketing Fraud Prevention Act

Public law: P.L. 105-184

Strengthens criminal law to require the forfeiture of any profits made from telemarketing fraud; requires the review of sentencing guidelines to determine whether the mandatory minimum sentences for such crimes should be increased; and requires restitution in some cases.

Throttle Criminal Use of Guns Bill

Cleared for the President

Provides a mandatory minimum sentence for possession of a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence or drug trafficking.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

Public Law: P.L. 105-178

Provides funding for highways, bridges, mass transit and highway safety programs to improve the transportation system for the 21st Century.

Tropical Forest Conservation Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-214

Gives the President authority to reduce the debt owed to the United States by Latin American and Caribbean countries which conduct activities to preserve or restore tropical forests.

Truth in Employment Act ("Anti-Salting")

Stopped by Democrat Filibuster

Amends the National Labor Relations Act to restore the balance of rights between employees and employers by making it clear that an employer is not required to hire a person who does not propose to work primarily for the interests of that employer.

Vacancies Act

Cleared for the President

Redresses the problem of persons serving for long periods of time in the Executive Branch in positions requiring Senate confirmation, when they have not been confirmed by the Senate as the Constitution

requires. The language provides a method for filling such vacancies with a person who has been confirmed by the Senate or with some other person who will serve temporarily (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Victim Rights Clarification Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-6

Provides that a victim of a crime may not be excluded from the trial merely because the victim may later testify at the sentencing hearings.

Volunteer Protection Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-19

As a part of the Republican agenda to provide much-needed legal reforms, this law protects volunteers from unjust lawsuits based on the simple negligence of volunteers. The law was needed because people were being deterred from volunteering because of concerns about liability risks, and this reduction in volunteerism in turn hurt nonprofit organizations and governments and the persons they serve.

Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act

Cleared for the President

Authorizes \$2.6 billion in additional funding over three years to reduce the supply of drugs and drug use through enhanced U.S. drug interdiction efforts in major transit countries and to support a comprehensive supply country eradication and crop substitution program in source countries (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Women's Health Research and Prevention Act

Cleared for the President

Revises and extends certain National Institutes of Health programs to improve women's health, including research, screening, prevention, treatment, education and data collection.

Workforce Improvement and Protection Act (H1-B Visas)

Cleared for the President

At the behest of high-tech companies unable to fill all their employment needs with U.S. workers, this bill increases the number of high tech temporary foreign workers that can enter the United States to fill those unfilled positions (included in the omnibus FY99 funding bill).

Workforce Investment Partnership Act

Public Law: P.L. 105-220

Raises skills and opportunities for Americans seeking lasting jobs by consolidating 60 existing programs into a single system; empowers states and localities to design and implement their own programs; and promotes business community involvement.

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